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AGENTS.

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[Concluded.]
An Occasional Paper.—Letters from the Bishop of British Columbia to Commissary Garrett, Penzance.

ENCOURAGEMENTS—ADDRESSES, ETC.

VICTORIA, March 14th, 1860.

I wrote to you last on the 9th of March. I thank God I have had encouragements which fill me with more and more desire to spend and be spent in this glorious work. The address, of which I send you a copy, was signed by above 800 male inhabitants of Vancouver Island, and I am told would have had more signatures if time had been given. This is gratifying, and will help my work.

My answer has reference to some questions agitated here.

When I arrived, I found the papers full of warfare about the "attempt" to have a "State Church," the idea of an English Bishop being apparently inseparable from tithes, Church-rates, etc. In my first sermon I proclaimed for liberty, and told the people of the Church that upon them rested the burden, and that I did not dream of resting upon the State. This had the desired effect. The movement was crushed. There has not been a syllable since. You will understand the allusion in the address and my reply.

Another subject of agitation here is the non-residence of British Columbia officials at New Westminster. The judge and others reside at Victoria—hence my allusion to giving a large share of attention to British Columbia.

THE ELECTION—COLORED PEOPLE.

When I arrived it was election time. The borough and county election produced vast excitement. The Americans tried to obtain a majority in the local Parliament, to vote for annexing this colony to the States. They were, however, quite checked,—the finishing stroke was given by the immigration of colored (African) families, who are very respectable, and faithfully loyal to Great Britain. I hire this house of one. Some of them are steady communicants of the Church. They are pleased to contribute to our objects; one of them gave £4 at a recent collection in church for the hospital. They come in great numbers from California, where they are not well treated. I hear that many more intend coming. May they not only find in this colony of Britain political freedom from earthly slavery, but may England's Church here supply them with true Gospel comfort, and may they always find in her a sheltering care for their immortal souls.

There has been a sharp contention on the question of color; the Americans, requiring that the colored people should not be allowed to occupy the same place with them in worship. One Independent Minister, a Mr. McFye, favored their unchristian narrowness; another maintained the English principle, that there should be no difference in the house of God. He has, however, been thrown over by the Society in London who maintained him, the "British Colonial Missionary Society." Mr. Clark nobly upheld the Christian and English sentiment; but his patrons have decided against him, and he has to leave the place; he seems a very respectable man, too good for his employers.

This intercourse with the descendants of former African slaves is a deeply interesting feature in this Mission. Who can tell, if our hands are strengthened in time, the blessed effects which some Missionaries from this place may in future bring to the land of their fathers.

THE CHINESE.

We are busy in preparing for the erection of a second church in Victoria. The appeal has been fairly responded to, and a famous lay committee are at work. Amongst other contributors is Quong Hing, a Chinese merchant, who has given £10. There are many Chinese. I trust this is ominous of a door of entrance within their hearts. I believe

this act was suggested by kind teaching imparted by one of my clergy, Mr. Sheepshanks, at New Westminster, to some Chinese men. He has several under regular instruction. May we be privileged to train up natives of that vast heathen people, who will carry the lamp of truth on from our infant Church to the Eastern nations. We have the golden opportunity, if the necessary means are supplied to us in time. Contributions to this Mission now will do three times as much practical benefit as in five years hence.

ROMANISM.

The Roman Catholic Bishop Demas has not seemed pleased at the cordial reception I have met with, and in consequence voted against the Government at the election. I imagine he has incensed his people against me. I have had to endure little inconveniences, in the stoppage of my supply of milk, and other trivial matters. I think it likely I may have trouble from the Romanists. At present they are not strong. They are, however, forward in the matter of education, both in the cases of boys and girls.

COLLEGIATE INSTITUTION.

I am anxious to find a good man to take the headship of a collegiate institution. It will be well supported, I doubt not. I believe I could promise him £600 per annum and a residence. It is considered probable that a good English education here would attract the sons of many English people in California. The building will be erected on a fine site overlooking the town and harbor, near the public park and the sea. I should like to plant here a germ of sound religious learning, which might hereafter be the great Northern University of these Western regions; and which might send forth Missionaries to lighten even China itself. The Americans think highly of education. It is much valued by them, and our English system is more substantial than theirs. I must have a man of high character and calibre, who would wisely secure the Institution on a sound basis. Boys of the upper class go at present to the Roman Catholic Bishop's school, who engages not to teach religion. The case, therefore, is urgent.

FEMALE COLLEGE.

It is quite true that the Roman Catholic Sisters of Mercy are the only persons here engaged in the education of girls of the better classes. And our church people send their children! They have recently opened a second establishment in the town, their first being situated a short way out. The only way of meeting them is by a female college, or upper school, for the daughters of merchants and professional people. Government it is impossible to get, and if got, most difficult to retain, on account of the scarcity of the sex and the number of worthy aspirants. I hope to establish something at once, and hope the wife of one of my clergy may be willing to undertake the office of principal, even for a time. The whole question of female agency in the Mission is most important, in order to prevent the sapping of the very life-blood of the future population with unsound religion and infidelity.

VARIETY OF RACES.

The account we gave at meetings of the great variety of races here is more than verified. I have seen myself every class. I give you an instance from one place, Douglas, a rising town on the route to the upper mines: it is from Mr. Gammage, our Missionary there:—Colored men, 8; Mexicans and Spaniards, 29; Chinese, 37; French and Indians, 16; Central Europe, 4; Northern Europe, 4; citizens of United States, 73; British subjects, 35. Total, 206. Of these the sexes are thus:—Males, 204; females, 2! As to children—Adults, 205; child, 1!

THE ATHELSTAN.

The Athelstan, with my iron church and mission-house, arrived on the last day of February. The cargo has come safe, and is now nearly discharged.

The Captain and crew, being mostly Yarmouth men, came up bodily to church, like a school, headed by my worthy servant, Bridgman, who went down to show them the way, and said it was the proudest day of his life.

We hope to have a Special Service on board, as was the case when she sailed from Yarmouth, before leaving this port.

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH.

The foundations are being dug; the situation is good, on the north side of the town. I divide the town into two parishes. There is great want of a second church. The other is now quite full; last Sunday some went away, as they could not find seats. The congregation is an interesting sight; it is composed principally of men, at least five-sixths are men, and men, too, of great education and shrewdness. When the proper proportion fill up, and wives and children are added, the accommodation would of course, then be utterly too small. Then there are many who must be looked up, who now go nowhere, who have lived strange and wandering lives; sheep without shepherds; them also we must bring. Every steamer brings increase. So that it was a wise precaution to have sent out a church, and I augur from it the greatest blessing.

The people, I must say, have come forward well. The principle I lay down with regard to the fund is, never to exceed in any grant a third of what is required; the people

to supply the two-thirds. It will draw out £2 here to meet every £1 of our fund. This is, in the present instance, a hard pull for them; they are, however, I think, doing very well. The subscription for the new church amounts to somewhere about £800!

EVENING SERVICE.

I am very fortunate in Mr. Cridge, the original Clergyman here. He is a truly good man, a sincere and devout Christian. He enters into all my plans, and is a great support to me. At my suggestion, he has just opened his church for Evening Service. It stands on a hill, and is a striking object over the whole town—lighted up, it was a beacon, the invitation of which could not be resisted, and from the first the congregation has been good. I preach every morning, and sometimes in the evening. We have seven Sunday Services for this district and neighborhood now. The first collections at Christ Church were for the Hospital. We collected at the three services above £60! This would be respectable even in Old England.

I will conclude this letter with a few extracts from my journal respecting the Indians.

The Indian subject is one of great anxiety, mingled with hope and encouragement. There are very many, and they are fast becoming corrupted by European vices. I stood and watched a poor Indian the other day who was intoxicated. He ran frantically round and round in a circle, and kept uttering loud talk in English! He repeated continually the same few words—perhaps all he knew; they contained a low and blasphemous oath! Yet these poor creatures are intelligent, and capable of reverence and thought of God.

VISITS TO INDIANS.

Tuesday, Jan. 17.—Mr. Pemberton, the magistrate, and Mr. Cridge, accompanied me to the Indian reserve. We met the chief of one tribe—the Songish. His name is "Freezy." He invited us to his hut. It was placed in the Indian village, which is composed of about twenty large square wooden erections, of plank boarding, and flat, illmade tops, through which air and water could plentifully enter, each about fifty feet square.

Freezy's dwelling was in one of these. It was partitioned off, the front open to the inside. On three sides were recesses, under a sub-roofing or canopy, in which were layers of matting for beds. In the centre was a small wood fire, at which were two women and a little boy. We took seats at once. I was placed in the middle as the Tyhee, or chief. Three friends, the councillors, came in, wrapped in their blankets; also several boys. Mr. Pemberton was interpreter; the language Chinook—this is the trading jargon, composed of English, French, and Indian words, with cant terms.

Mr. P. explained I was a King George or English Tyhee, come to try to do them good. He interpreted my expressions of good-will towards them, and my desire to educate their children. He also, as well as the Chinook could express, told them my desire for their spiritual welfare, and wish to show them the way to heaven, and to learn them the only true God and Jesus Christ.

They spoke several times in reply, and said they were glad any one would be their friend, and do them good, and they would like to be educated and have better houses. They had heard it said they were going to be removed. This grieved them much. What could they do if sent away?—here they could get work, and dollar, and food, but if sent away, they must starve!

We then examined the little boy Peter, Freezy's son. He and several other boys came to church on Sunday, and are instructed in a class. They gave answers—their letters, numbers, small words. I was struck with the facility of pronunciation. The parents and those present seemed delighted and proud at their children's answers. Freezy's dress was a shabby coat and trousers.

The women were making a rope. In other lodges the women were making mats, weaving rushes and grass. One had bracelets, and hands covered with rings. I was struck with the industrious character of these poor people.

January 18.—An Indian came to call. He looked like a respectable English young man, of pleasing countenance; he could speak English a little. He was a Chymysan from Fort Simpson. I visited his lodge yesterday. It was neat and clean, and had comforts: a nice stove, bedstead; there was also a desk. The wife, named Tarx, neat and pleasing.

He is called John Clark; a pure Indian. He has come to trade, and keeps a stall. He complained of the Hyder Indians near his lodge, another tribe, more fierce: "Fight all day, all night—drink bad—I get no sleep—my wife frightened—my little boy cry." He told me he prayed. He knew some of the leading points of the Christian faith. He asked for a Prayer-book. I promised I would bring one.

January 21.—I went with Mr. Dundas to the Chymysan village. The Indians there come from Fort Simpson to trade. Found the lodge of John Clark, to whom I gave the Prayer-book. It was Saturday. There were beautiful white loaves of bread which he had brought home; the whole interior

resembled that of a cotter in England on Saturday night.

He placed seats. He was pleased with his book. He brought out a box with writing books and account books. He writes a good hand, and spells fairly in English. He repeated the Lord's Prayer in a most reverend and touching way. He could tell of the dying of Christ for us, and said he loved Christ. We had interesting conversation, in which he evidently took pleasure. We all knelt down; he put his hands together, made his wife and child do the same, and I prayed our Heavenly Father's blessing upon our plans, and upon these poor Indians, that He would cause his truth to be known by them, that all might be brought to have the same hope, and be meek partakers of heaven through his dear Son.

I see John Clark occasionally at church. This pleasing result is owing a good deal to the zealous and successful exertions of our Church Missionary Catechist, Mr. Duncan.

February 3rd.—I visited to-day Mr. and Mrs. Hall who take interest in the Indians. The children come to them for instruction. They are uncertain in attendance, and must have rice and treacle sometimes.

In a neighboring house is an Indian woman, the wife of a respectable white man named Cotsford. She is a nice, clean, and well ordered person, understands but will not speak English. You would not know her pretty little girl of seven years from an English girl of superior parentage. The child speaks English.

DEATH.

The other day the mother of Mrs. Cotsford went out at 8 o'clock, got drunk, and died at 10. Mrs. Hall saw the preparation for the burial. The body was placed in a coffin with fifteen blankets. Under her head were placed two new ones; a work-bag with needles, and thread, a looking-glass, a box of matches, and sundry other things were put inside.

CONTAMINATION.

The language uttered by the Indians is sometimes very bad. They will exclaim in violent oaths when put out; but to our shame, the oaths are in the English language, which they have learned from Englishmen and Americans. They have no oaths in their own language!

Even the children catch quickly and use readily these horrid sounds.

Two Indian children, who come to the Sunday School, were striving together the other day, when the older said to the other, "What the h—ll are you about?" Alas! that their first English words should be such as these. Let us make haste and bring Christ amongst them, that of them it may be said rather when their lips resound the praise of the Lamb, "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou perfected praise."

SLAVERY.

The tribes have much decreased since 1846. More than half of the Songish are gone—these live here—their destruction is occasioned principally by drink and dissolute habits. Those nearest the whites are worst. Slavery has increased. Female slaves are in demand. Distant tribes make war upon each other, and bring their female slaves to the market. You will hardly credit it, but it is strictly true, women are purchased as slaves to let them out for immoral purposes. A female slave has been known recently to be purchased for 200 dollars (£40). The Indians buy their wives, but slaves are more costly. Upon an Indian woman recently killed in a brawl was found 300 dollars (£60)—the wages of iniquity.

There is a white man, we trust not an Englishman, near Langley, who owns such slaves, and hangs out a sign over his door to signify the horrible iniquity there pursued. An Indian named Bear's Skin makes large profits by the traffic in female slaves.

INDIAN CHILDREN.

I gathered together the children of the Songish tribe, who live in a village close by. A treat of rice, molasses, and buns was the attraction. There were twenty-nine—sixteen girls, thirteen boys. They were like little gipsies, with their sparkling black eyes, long black hair, and very dirty skins; their dress a tattered garment and a piece of blanket.

The first thing I did was to take down all their names—hard work, as the pronunciation is extremely difficult.

The following are some of the names:—Girls—Kalateh-tenah, How-was, Kah-kalah, Salak-tenah, Tese-otya, Yia-kotya.

Boys—lekleose, Tchall, Soveya, Nink-h, Tichayel, Sepe, Jasseyo.

Some had evidently European names,—Susu, Cecil, Peter, Freesy.

This operation was evidently pleasing to them. Some were very bright and superior, and on the whole they were a good-tempered set. Their manners were quite as good as ordinary children, and the old ones reproved the younger when making a noise.

We had only a dozen bowls. Those who had to wait showed no impatience, but meekly bided their turn. Spoons were held beautifully, there was no haste or scrambling, and they assisted each other.

The elder girls were modest and shy.

The ages were from twelve to six.

The little ones were very shy, and occasionally looked as if they would have run away to some hole had there been means of escape.

Before the meal I said grace. We had put on our hats, in order to take them off in token of solemnity. They stood up, and I said in the Chinook language:—

Sackally Tyhee Papa! Mercie klosk Muck-muck.

Almighty Great Chief Father, thanks for good sweet things.

The Chinook is the trade jargon, made up of different languages and slang.

We afterwards sang "Praise God," to the Old Hundredth. I first pronounced the words, which they repeated. The Revs. Mr. Cridge and Dundas, and Mr. Pemberton, the police magistrate, then sang. We sang heartily, and the little voices mingled with our own; and when we finished, we found a remarkable impression to be produced. All were reverently hushed in a fixed and thoughtful manner. They were evidently touched in their little spirits, and not one broke the silence till one of us did so.

At the close we sang the same again and the effect was just as before.

We thought how joyful will be the day when out of the mouths of these babes and sucklings, the praise of Jesus shall indeed be perfected. We had an ottien of that happy day in the way these little ones were touched by the songs of Zion.

I thank God I am well. The work at times before me would cause a deep depression, from its magnitude and variety, did I not endeavor humbly to look to the Divine Grace promised for our only strength.

I trust you will, in all your addresses, urge upon the Church the need we feel for their prayers. Praying that God may be with you, believe me, my dear Garrett, ever affectionately yours,

G. COLUMBIA

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